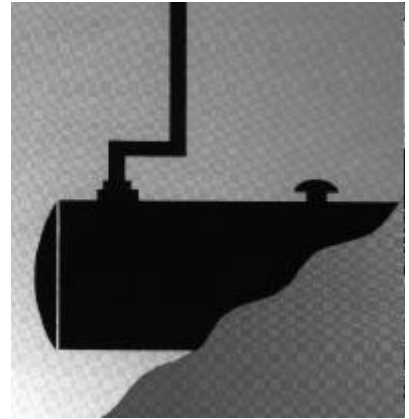


What Do You Need To Know About Underground Storage Tanks?



What is an underground storage tank (UST)?

- An UST is a tank and connected piping that has at least 10 percent of its volume underground; and
- The Federal UST regulations apply only to USTs storing **petroleum** or certain hazardous substances (those hazardous substances identified by CERCLA except for those listed as hazardous wastes).
- Federal requirements do not apply to: tanks storing heating oil used where stored; tanks on or above the floor of underground areas; septic tanks and storm and wastewater systems; and tanks of 110 gallons or less capacity. State requirements may apply to these tanks.

How many USTs...and who is responsible for them?

- About 900,000 active federally regulated USTs buried at over 300,000 sites nationwide.
- Nearly all of these USTs contain petroleum.
- More than half of the USTs are at sites operated by marketers who sell petroleum to the public, such as gas stations and convenience stores.
- Less than half of the USTs are at sites operated by nonmarketers who use USTs solely for their own needs, such as Federal, State, and local governments, schools, motor pools, and fleet service operators.

What's the problem?

- Over 370,000 confirmed releases have been reported.
- Fumes from leaks can cause explosions or fires.
- Leaking USTs contaminate groundwater, surface water, and soils.
- About half of releases have affected groundwater.
- Although average cleanup costs are \$125,000, groundwater cleanup at some sites exceeds \$1 million.

What's the solution?

- EPA published UST regulations in 1988 (40 CFR Parts 280 & 281).
- UST requirements for release prevention/detection and protection from spills, overfills, and corrosion:
 - USTs installed before December 22, 1988 must have release detection no later than December 1993, and must be protected from spills, overfills, and corrosion by December 1998. These USTs can also be in compliance if they were closed properly or replaced with new USTs by the 1998 deadline.
 - USTs installed on or after December 22, 1988 must meet all UST requirements when installed.
- Corrective action requirements must be followed for all USTs whenever a release occurs so that cleanups take place quickly, before significant damage occurs.
- States and EPA are committed to an enforcement strategy that will identify noncompliant USTs and issue penalties that can exceed \$11,000 a day.

Want Information From Our Web Site Or Hotline?

EPA's Office of Underground Storage Tanks maintains a Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/oust/>.

This site can connect you to a variety of UST-related resources:

- UST requirements as found in the Federal Register and as described in plain language booklets
- Contacts within EPA and with State UST programs
- How to order publications, videos, and other compliance assistance materials.
- Links to other UST-related compliance assistance Web sites.

You can also use a **free EPA Hotline at 800-424-9346** to speak directly with people who can provide free compliance assistance materials and answer questions.